DIVERSITY IN THE GENOMICS WORK FORCE

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Why Does A Diverse Student Body/Work Force Matter?

- Diversity contributes to the cognitive and affective development for all students.

- Diversity in the healthcare workforce leads to improved access and improved care for underserved populations.

- Diversity leads to decreased health disparities and improves outcomes for minority patients.
What are the Barriers?

Some identified barriers from the literature for entry or retention in health professional training:

- Insufficient academic preparation to meet admission requirements.
- Lack of exposure to health profession career.
- Poor advising.
- Lack of role models.
- Limited financial assistance to support educational pursuits.
- Stereotypical threat.
- Lack of institutional and faculty support overseeing and within the training program.
### Why Does A Diverse Student Body/Work Force Matter?
#### Overview of Race and/or Ethnicity for Genetic Counselors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>From 2023 NSGC Professional Status Survey (n=3,100) (45% response rate)</th>
<th>U.S. Population from 2022 Annual American Community Survey (only single race statistics used)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5.9% (may not include West Asian/Middle Eastern/North African)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Asian/Middle Eastern/North African</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American/Alaska Native/First Nations</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>1% (no First Nations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latinx (regardless of reported race/ethnicity)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to improve support and success for students of color?

Create an environment that supports Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (Safe Space).

- Have institutional policies on DEIJ
- Employ diverse faculty (especially in leadership)
- Mandate faculty, staff, and clinical supervisor training on DEIJ issues
- Identify and develop systems to support interracial learning and interaction
- Model open communication with students
- Commit to action on identified issues
- Do continuous evaluation to identify strengths and areas for improvement
WHAT THINGS ARE WE DOING TO SUPPORT MINORITY STUDENTS AND PRACTICING PROFESSIONALS??
Minority Genetic Professionals Network

- A project of the SRG Network developed to increase access to genetic services and education for racial and ethnic minority families by increasing the number of minority genetics providers.
- Started as support for activities to recruit minority students to enter genetic professions especially genetic counseling.
- Expanded to support practicing minority genetic professionals to provide a safe space for networking, mentoring, healing, and leadership development.
MGPN Activities

**Outreach activities**
- Participation in local/regional events
- Hold annual national virtual Career Fair
- Social Media (Twitter: @minoritygenetics, IG: @minoritygenetic)
- Website resources (minoritygenetics.org)

**Networking**
- Slack and customized channels for communication and networking
- Meet-ups (in-person and virtual)

**Mentoring Program**
- Have formal mentoring program for current genetic trainees or providers and prospective students
MGPN Activities

Interview Practice
• Members volunteer to do practice interviews with prospective students

Research support
• Dissemination for genetic counseling student research project recruitment

Self care/improvement
• Virtual healing sessions
• Virtual leadership training
QUESTIONS?

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